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Emory Ford: Stormwater task force urges public hearings

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To the editor:

The City Council recently appointed a task force to recommend a fair and equitable method for funding Northampton's needs for management of stormwater and flood control. The task force was composed of members from all the wards, a mayoral appointee, a member of the Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Board of Public Works.

On July 8, the task force reviewed its finding with the City Council/BPW conference committee. Two possible formulas were recommended to calculate a utility fee for funding stormwater management and flood control. The complete report is available on the Northampton website (<http://www.northamptonma.gov/uploads/basicContentWidget/11763/Storm%20Water%20Ad-HOC~sep~FINAL~sep~REPORT~sep~v3.pdf>).

The task force also recommended that the conference committee and the Northampton City Council reach out to the community to ensure citizen understanding and consensus on the need for funding for stormwater management and flood control.

The task force has completed the assignment from the City Council but the task force members believe that a citywide discussion is needed before implementing any utility fee for storm water management and flood control. It is our understanding that the City Council and/or the BPW will be hosting one or more open public forums about this issue. We strongly encourage the public to educate themselves and participate in this important discussion.

Task force members included: Rick Clark, Ward 3; James Dostal, City Council appointee; Dan Felten, Ward 3; Emory Ford, Ward 7; Alex Ghiselin, Ward 5; Chris Hellman, Board of Public Works; Ruth McGrath, Ward 6; Megan Murphy Wolf, Ward 5; John Shenette, Smith College; David Teece, mayor appointee.

Emory Ford

Florence

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